

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 TEHRAN 09641 250942Z

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P 250755Z SEP 76

FM AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9259

S E C R E T TEHRAN 9641

NODIS/CHEROKEE

FOR SECRETARY FROM AMBASSADOR

EO 11652: XGDS 1

TAGS: PFOR, IR, IS

SUB: PERES VISIT TO IRAN

REF: (A) TEHRAN 0085, (B) TEHRAN 0682, (C) TEHRAN 7765 (PARA 7)

1. DURING WEEKEND VISIT WITH MINISTER OF COURT ALAM IN HIS HOME COUNTRY AT BIRJAND, WAS ABLE TO CONFIRM THAT ISRAELI MINISTER OF DEFENSE, SHIMON PERES, MADE A SECRET VISIT HERE TWO WEEKS AGO AND SHAH TOOK THIS OCCASION TO HIT HARD ABOUT ISRAELI LOBBYING AGAINST US ARMS SALES TO IRAN. BACKGROUND ON THIS IS THAT DURING PRIVATE TALK WITH SHAH FOLLOWING AUDIENCE FOR SENATOR BIRCH BAYH ON SEPTEMBER 6, I INDICATED THAT I THOUGHT BAYH COULD BE OVERLY OPTIMISTIC ABOUT ARMS SALES DEBATE IN CONGRESS AND THAT IT WAS HIGHLY DESIRABLE THE SHAH MAKE IT CLEAR TO THE ISRAELIS THAT CERTAIN LOBBYING IN WASHINGTON WAS HAVING UNFORTUNATE EFFECTS FOR IRAN. SHAH RECALLED HIS CONVERSATION WITH YOU ON THIS SAME SUBJECT AND NOTED THAT I WAS SIMPLY MAKING TO HIM THE SAME POINTS WHICH YOU HAD COVERED. TALK WITH PERES A FEW DAYS LATER IS NOW CONFIRMED AS VEHICLE HE USED TO GET ACROSS HIS POINTS.

2. IN THIS GENERAL CONNECTION YOU SHOULD KNOW THAT SHAH IS SO CONCERNED ABOUT IRAN'S PRESS IN THE UNITED STATES THAT HE HAS ORDERED SURVEYS TO BE MADE IN AN EFFORT TO ESTABLISH WHAT HAS GONE WRONG AND WHAT CAN BE DONE TO CORRECT THE IMAGE.

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 TEHRAN 09641 250942Z

ALAM HAS BEEN PUT IN CHARGE OF THIS EFFORT THUS REMOVING

THE RESPONSIBILITY FROM THE GOVERNMENT, AT LEAST FOR THE TIME BEING, AND GIVING IT TO ONE OF SHAH'S MOST TRUSTED ADVISERS.

3. HAVE NO DESIRE TO STICK MY FINGER INTO SOMETHING WHICH DOES NOT CONCERN ME, BUT THOUGHT YOU MIGHT BE INTERESTED IN CERTAIN ELLIPTICAL COMMENT WHICH MEIR AMIT, HEAD OF KOOR AND FORMER CHIEF OF ISRAELI INTELLIGENCE, MADE TO ME AT LUNCH ON MONDAY LAST. HE NOTED THAT PRIME MINISTER RABIN HAD DONE BETTER POLITICALLY THAN HE HAD ORIGINALLY THOUGHT HE WOULD. HE IS CONCERNED THESE DAYS, HOWEVER, THAT RABIN IS SO CAUTIOUS AND CONSERVATIVE THAT HE IS PERMITTING THE POLITICAL PAUSE AND RELAXATION OF TENSION CREATED BY THE LEBANESE CRISIS TO SLOP AWAY FROM HIM AND IS STANDING PAT ON ALMOST ALL ISSUES. PUT ANOTHER WAY, AMIT BELIEVES THAT THE REAL ISRAELI PROBLEMS TODAY ARE ECONOMIC OR, TO USE HIS WORDS, "ECONOMIC SOCIAL". HE BELIEVES THAT RABIN SHOULD ATTEMPT TO MAKE SOME "REVOLUTIONARY" MOVE IN THIS FIELD IF HE IS GOING TO BE ABLE TO SURVIVE AS HEAD OF THE GOVERNMENT. AMIT DID NOT INDICATE WHAT SUCH A "REVOLUTIONARY" MOVE MIGHT BE, BUT SINCE HE IS NO LIBERAL HIMSELF, HE OBVIOUSLY FEELS THAT CIRCUMSTANCES REQUIRE THE GOVERNMENT TO BREAK SOME NEW GROUND SOON OR IT WILL HAVE LOST ITS OPPORTUNITY. HAVE NO DOUBT THAT YOU AND EMBASSY TEL AVIV ARE WELL ABOARD ON ALL THIS. I SIMPLY PASS IT ALONG FOR WHAT IT MAY BE WORTH.

HELMS

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